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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/363,025	07/29/1999	MASAHITO YAMAMOTO	38.C13711-US	7597

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EXAMINER	
LIN, WEN TAI	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2154	9

DATE MAILED: 12/09/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/363,025	YAMAMOTO, MASAHITO	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Wen-Tai Lin	2154	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *30 October 2002* .

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *101-124* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *101-124* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11)☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a)☐ approved b)☐ disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ .
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: .

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 101-124 are presented for examination. Claims 1-100 are canceled and claims 101-124 are newly added.

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, USC code not included in this action can be found in the prior Office Action.

3. Claims 105, 108, 116 and 119 are objected to because of the following informalities/issues:

(A) In claims 105 and 116, it appears that "the data" and "the resulting data" lack antecedent basis.

(B) As to claims 108 and 119, it is not clearly understood what is meant by "... reserved for the agent information with image for printing processed by the agent information being retained" [i.e., "... reserved for the image that is processed by the apparatus retaining the agent information"?].

Clarification/Correction is required in response to this office action.

U.S.C. 103 Rejection

4. Claims 101-124 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshiaki [JP11-110143-A].

5. Yoshiaki's abstract was cited in the previous office action. The current reference has included an English translation.

6. As to claims 101-102, Yoshiaki taught the invention substantially as claimed including: an office apparatus which can be connected to an external apparatus via a network, said office apparatus comprising:

- reception control means for controlling a reception process of receiving agent information including a command train and data [page 7: paragraph 2, lines 1-9];
- control means for controlling a processing mechanism of said office apparatus by executing, based on the command train included in the received agent information, a control program that controls the processing mechanism [page 7: paragraph 2, lines 9-17; page 19, paragraph 12];
- memory management means for managing a memory area for executing the command train included in the received agent information [note: it is obvious that Yoshiaki's system must have a memory management means, held under

the operating system, for reserving a memory area for the execution of a printing job, because each printing job requires memory space for storing data and the execution programs];

Yoshiaki did not specifically teach:

- a transmission control means for controlling, responsive to said control means terminating execution of the control program based on the command train, a transmission process of transmitting a process end notice to the external apparatus so as to cause a display unit of the external apparatus to display a process end confirmation window; and
- obtainment means for obtaining a reply to the process end notice from the external apparatus, wherein said memory management means releases the memory area in response to said obtainment means obtaining the reply from the external apparatus.

However, it is well known in network printing that a user can cause a pending or queued printing job to be aborted, and in response the user terminal is presented with a dialog box prompting for confirmation of the cancellation attempt.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have adopted a similar conventional procedure in Yoshiaki's system because aborting a printing job is a critical decision requiring the user's confirmation, thereby preventing any inadvertent cancellation in Yoshiaki's system.

Further, it is also well known in the art that the memory area reserved for a task is released (by the operating system) following the conclusion of an executed task.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have adopted a similar memory-releasing procedure in Yoshiaki's system, so that the reserved memory space could be reused by a follow-up task.

7. As to claim 103, Yoshiaki taught that the office apparatus further comprises an execution means for executing the command train to determine whether a result of processing by the processing mechanism is an unrecoverable error, and if the result of processing is an unrecoverable error, writing the occurrence of the unrecoverable error to a memory area which is dynamically reserved for the agent information as a data field [claim 4 on page 6, claim 10 on page 8 and paragraph 25 on page 25].

8. As to claim 104, Yoshiaki taught the invention substantially as claimed including: an office apparatus which can be connected to a network comprising:

- reception control means for controlling a reception process of receiving agent information including a command train in which a document printing job is divided as a series of processes to be executed in a plurality of office apparatuses [paragraph 10 on page 18];

- control means for controlling a processing mechanism of said office apparatus by executing, based on the command train included in the received agent information, a control program that controls the processing mechanism;
- execution means for executing one of the series of processes described in the agent information to be executed in said office apparatus [paragraph 11 on page 18]; and
- transmission control means for controlling, responsive to said execution means terminating execution of the one process, a transmission process of automatically transmitting the agent information to an external office apparatus so as to cause the external apparatus to execute the command train based on the partitioned tasks [paragraph 13 on page 20].

Yoshiaki did not specifically teach that the printing job is described in a work flow program.

However, Yoshiaki taught that for purpose of load sharing and fault-tolerance, a printing job can be divided among a plurality of printers and carried out using a moving agent technology [paragraphs 5-9 on pages 16-17]. It is obvious that, using the moving agent technology, partitioning one printing jobs among a plurality of printers is similar to partitioning multiple printing jobs among the plurality of printers.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that Yoshiaki's system can also be made to carry out multiple printing jobs described in a work flow environment, because by so doing Yoshiaki's

network printers can be more efficiently utilized in more sophisticated printing assignments.

9. As to claim 106, Yoshiaki further taught that the work flow can be programmed such that a printer executes a print process and then transmits image data for printing to the external office apparatus and such that the external office apparatus stores the image data [claim 12 on page 8 and claim 17 on page 10; i.e., based on the passage, it is obvious that, disregarding whether a printer encounters failure or not, Yoshiaki's system is able to divide a printing process into different stages and make it carried out at different machines].

10. As to claim 107, Yoshiaki further taught that said transmission control means controls the transmission process to copy the agent information in whole or in part and distributes the copied agent information to at least one external office apparatus such that the series of processes described in the work flow may be executed in parallel [paragraph 8 on page 17].

11. As to claim 109, Yoshiaki taught that said processing mechanism is a print mechanism.

Yoshiaki did not specifically teach that the office apparatus has a plurality of processing mechanisms including image filing and scanner mechanisms.

However, it is well known that a multi-mode office apparatus could provide multiple processing mechanisms for functioning as printer, facsimile and copier, etc. Thus it is obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that Yoshiaki's printer can be replaced by a multi-mode apparatus, while keeping the aforementioned communication protocol intact, thereby providing multiple functions in the same apparatus.

12. As to claims 105, 108 and 110-124, since the features of these claims can also be found in claims 101-109, 112 and 115, they are rejected for the same reasons set forth in the rejection of claims 101-109, 112 and 115 above.

13. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 101-124 on 10/30/2002 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

14. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

15. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the

shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Wen-Tai Lin whose telephone number is (703)305-4875. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday(8:00-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Meng-Ai An can be reached on (703)305-9678. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are as follows:

(703)746-7239 for official communications;

(703)746-7238 for after final communications; and

(703)746-7240 for status inquires draft communication.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)305-3900.

Wen-Tai Lin

December 3, 2002

ZARNI MAUNG
PRIMARY EXAMINER